

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated January 5, 2005, pending claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,415,901 to Usoro (“Usoro”). Pending claims 2 and 11-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro. Pending claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,078,649 to Leichliter (“Leichliter”). Finally, claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,255,193 to Slesar (“Slesar”).

Arguments Supporting the Withdrawal Of §102 Rejection:

Pending claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Usoro. Applicants amend independent claims 1 and 9 to include a driven mechanism being connected with the clutch housing. Applicants submit that Usoro does not disclose each and every limitation of Applicants’ amended claims 1 and 9. Particularly, Usoro fails to disclose a sleeve as required by Applicants amended claims 1 and 9. The shaft 18 identified in the Office Action as the sleeve of independent claims 1 and 9 (which is reference number 46 in the drawings of Applicants’ application) is not the sleeve required in claims 1 and 9. The shaft 18 of Usoro is instead equivalent to the driven mechanism or spline 38 of Applicants’ application. Further, there is no structure disclosed in Usoro that can be considered the sleeve of Applicants’ claim 1 and 9. Usoro, therefore, fails to disclose a sleeve as required by Applicants’ independent claims 1 and 9.

Additionally, Usoro fails to disclose the sleeve having a predetermined shape substantially conforming to the predetermined shape of the clutch housing. If for argument sake, the shaft 18 is equivalent to the sleeve 46 of Applicants’ claims (something Applicants are unwilling to concede), as can be seen in FIG. 1, the shape of the shaft 18 clearly does not substantially conform to the shape of the clutch housing 12. The Office Action provides that the “sleeve of Usoro conforms to the shape of

the housing at least at the point where they contact.” Claims 1 and 9, however, require that the sleeve have a predetermined shape substantially conforming to the predetermined shape of the clutch housing. These concepts, however, are not equivalent. Having the shaft 18 of Usoro conforming to the shape of housing at the point they contact is not equivalent to the sleeve have a predetermined shape substantially conforming to the predetermined shape of the clutch housing. As shown in FIG. 1 of Usoro, the shaft 18 has a first portion that slopes down to a second portion. The shaft 18 then slopes down again to a third portion. Next, the shaft 18 steps up to a fourth portion. Finally, the shaft 18 steps down again to a fifth portion. The housing 12 on the other hand steps up and then extends straight therefrom. It only contains two portions. The shapes, therefore, of the shaft 18 and the housing 12 do not substantially conform with each other, as required by Applicants’ independent claims 1 and 9. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 9 and respectfully request indication that such claims are allowable.

As dependent claims 3, 4, 7-8, and 10 depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 and 9 and add additional limitations thereto, Applicants submit that the arguments above apply equally thereto. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 4, 7-8, and 10 and request indication that such claims are allowable.

Arguments Supporting the Withdrawal Of §103 Rejection:

Claims 2 and 11-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro. Similar to above, Applicants amend independent claims 11 and 16 by adding a driven mechanism being connected with the clutch housing. As previously argued, however, Usoro fails to disclose the sleeve as required by Applicants' independent claims 11 and 16. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 11 and 16 and respectfully request indication that such claims are allowable.

As dependent claims 2, 12-15, and 17 depend directly or indirectly from claims 1, 9, 11, and 16 and add additional limitations thereto, Applicants submit that the arguments above apply equally thereto. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2, 11-15, and 17 and request indication that such claims are allowable.

Pending claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro in view of Leichliter. As claim 5 depends directly from claim 1 and adds additional limitations thereto, the argument above applies equally to claim 5. Accordingly, Applicants' respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5 and request indication that such claim is allowable.

Finally, claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Usoro in view of Slesar. As claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1 and add additional limitations thereto, the argument above applies equally to claims 5 and 6. Accordingly, Applicants' respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 6 and request indication that such claims are allowable.

Applicants add claims 18-20 to the present application. No new matter has been added by way of these claims. Support for these claims can clearly be found in the drawings and in paragraph [0015] of the specification. Moreover, as these claims depend from independent claims 1, 9, and 11 and add additional limitations thereto, the arguments above apply equally to these claims. Accordingly, Applicants' respectfully request indication that such claims are allowable.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and accordingly, respectfully requests the allowance thereof.

Respectfully,

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